

Second Quarter Regional Research Meeting: Northern Region, Ghana

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The Africa Research In Sustainable Intensification for the Next Generation (Africa RISING) program comprises three research-for-development projects supported by the United States Agency for International Development as part of the U.S. government’s Feed the Future initiative.

Through action research and development partnerships, Africa RISING will create opportunities for smallholder farm households to move out of hunger and poverty through sustainably intensified farming systems that improve food, nutrition, and income security, particularly for women and children, and conserve or enhance the natural resource base.

The three regional projects are led by the International Institute of Tropical Agriculture (in West Africa and East and Southern Africa) and the International Livestock Research Institute (in the Ethiopian Highlands). The International Food Policy Research Institute leads the program’s monitoring, evaluation and impact assessment. <http://africa-rising.net/>

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# Background

Africa RISING project in Ghana is a USAID government funded project led by International Institute of Tropical Agriculture (IITA). It is a research project into sustainable intensification and integration of natural resources to improve productivity, nutrition, income security and reduce hunger and poverty in smallholder families especially children and women. The project is being implemented in the three northern regions of Ghana (Northern, Upper East and Upper West). In Northern Region the project is implemented in two districts, namely Tolon and Savelugu Districts. In Savelugu District, the project is implemented in five communities (Jana, Duko, Botingli, Tibali and Kpallung).

# Regional Research Meetings

Africa RISING project Ghana organizes quarterly regional research meetings in the 3 northern regions. The objective of the meetings is to provide a platform for interaction among work research theme leaders, FBOs and other partners to foster integrated approach for implementing project activities.

# Highlights of Regional Research meeting

The meeting was held on 17th September, 2015 at IITA conference hall in Tamale, Ghana. Participants included; research theme leaders, FBO members from all intervention communities, District Directors of Agriculture, Research for Development (R4D) platform members and District nutrition officers.

## Meeting objectives and expected outcomes

The key objective of this meeting is to provide a niche for interaction among research theme leaders and partners to foster collaborative approach in planning and implementing project activities. Specific objectives of the regional research meeting were to present:

1. Progress of implementation of project activities;
2. Challenges affecting implementation of project activities;
3. Plan activities for the next quarter.

The expected outcomes of the meeting were to:

1. Deliver progress report for implementation of project activities
2. Identify challenges affecting implementation of project and possible solutions.
3. Propose activities for the next quater.

## Meeting process

The meeting was chaired by the Savelugu Municipal Director of Agriculture, Mr. Francis Neindow. The meeting started at exactly 9: 00 am with self-introduction of all the participants.

# Welcome address by Regional Co-coordinator

Mr Abdul Rahman (Northern regional coordinator for Africa RISING) welcomed all participants to the meeting, adding that participants should take good advantage of this meeting by tapping into potential areas of interest for strong integration in implementing project activities. He therefore charged all participants to give-out their best in terms of presentation and discussions to make the meeting a successful one.

# Improving cereal-legume cropping system trials in Northern Region

Mr. Abdul-Rahman Nurudeen made a presentation to update participants on cereal-legume cropping system activities carried out from July to September, 2015.

Activities carried out included:

• Establishment of mother, baby and upscaling trials

• Agronomic management

• Data collection

• Research meetings and workshops

List of technology trials established in 2015 as follows:

1. Nitrogen fertilizer rates on maize yield

2. Spraying regime effect on grain yield of cowpea

3. Integrated soil fertility management in soybean yield

4. Maize – Legume strip cropping systems in Northern Ghana

5. Phosphorus fertilizer rates on yield of groundnut

6. Planting time and spraying regime on yield of Sesame

7. Nitrogen rates and time of intercropping sesame in maize

8. Maize-Roselle intercrop as influenced by plant density

9. Maize-Okra intercrop as influenced by plant density

10. Maize-Eggplant intercrop as influenced by plant density

11. Maize-Pepper intercrop as influenced by plant density

12. Maize-Tomato intercrop as influenced by plant density

13. Soil and water conservation measures on yield of cereals and legumes

14. Adaptation of pigeon pea short duration varietal trial

15. Adaptation of pigeon pea medium duration varietal

An analysis of activities in Northern Region shown that, Tolon has 10.2% more participating farmers than savelugu (Table 1). He also added that, Tolon district has more trials than Savelugu.

Table 1. List of trials established in 2015 season

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Trials | Mother | Baby | Up-scaling |
| Savelugu | 29 | 182 | 92 |
| Tolon/Kumbungu | 31 | 177 | 108 |

Table 2. List of 2015 season Africa RISING farmers in Northern region

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| District | Female | Male | Total |
| Savelugu | 78 | 196 | 274 |
| Tolon/ Kumbungu | 90 | 195 | 285 |

Challenges:

1. Limited resources

2. Erratic rainfall pattern

Plan of activities for the next 3 months:

1. Agronomic practices

2. External evaluators field visit

3. Field days

4. Harvesting

5. Data entry and cleaning

In conclusion, He said the rain started very late but has been quite consistent and believes yield will be better than last year if it should extend to end of October 2015.

# Socioeconomic studies on profitability of Africa RISING technologies

Mr. Stephen Frimpong, Research Associate –Socioeconomics, presenting on behalf of Dr Bekele, Africa RISING Agricultural Economist, highlighted studies conducted on the profitability of Africa RISING technologies. He mentioned that the initial research outcomes show that most of Africa RISING technologies are more profitable as existing farmer practices or better than farmer technologies, but was quick to add that the farmer technologies were not necessarily local undeveloped technologies. The Research Associate also presented a proposal for a study to monitor adoption of Africa RISING technologies. According to Mr. Frimpong, social, economic, cultural, political and institutional barriers may constrain the adoption of technology despite the enormous benefit associated with the technology. The study was therefore designed to:

1. Provide analytical information on the adoption of AR technologies
2. How well the technologies are being adopted
3. Examine who is using which technologies or elements of technologies,
4. Where, why and how these are being modified by different farmer or household categories

# Report on Savelugu MoFA activities

The municipal director of Agriculture Mr. Francis Neindow briefed the house on their activities:

1. Land preparations
2. Establishment of both baby and mother trials
3. Agronomic practices

He also said, Savelegu department of agriculture has prepared land and established baby and up-scaling trials for two hundred and one (201) out of two hundred and seventy four (274) farmers in the district. First weeding and basal fertilizer application to all maize baby and up-scaling trials have been completed successfully for one hundred and thirty nine (139) farmers out of one hundred and forty-two (142). First spray regime for cowpea trials has also been completed. Supervision of trials was still ongoing.

Challenges:

1. Erratic rainfall pattern especially in July
2. Unavailability of tractor services
3. Farmers’ anxiety to crop their own fields as a result of the late start of the rains.

# Report on Savelugu R4D activities

Mr. Mohammed Abdul Rahman (R4D member) presented on behalf of Savelegu R4D on the activities they carried out:

1. Meetings

2. Field visit to Africa RISING communities

According to him, Savelugu R4D met to plan how to organize field visit to the five intervention communities to monitor the distribution of inputs, farmers field, farmers perception about the prospect of the project and some challenges. According to him, during the meeting, they identified livestock and nutrition as the weak component of project from their last field visit. They agreed at the meeting for the project to:

1. establish farmer field schools to train farmers on nutritional values of the produce they cultivate,
2. Do more in small ruminant production.

He also added that during the R4D team field visit, they observed the following:

1. Timely delivery of inputs to farmers by Africa RISING team.
2. Farmers expressed intrest in small ruminant production and ask the team to tell Africa RISING project team to do more in livestock production.
3. Delayed in establishment of trials due to lack of tractor service.

Challenges:

1. Difficulties in getting all members to attend meetings.
2. Limited resources in carry out some operations.

# Report on Tolon R4Dactivities

Mr. Abukari Issah (R4D Treasure) presented on behalf of Tolon R4D activities:

1. Meetings
2. Field visit to Africa RISING communities

He said, the R4D met to review the activities for the second quarter, plan activities for the next quarter which involved field trips to monitor distribution of inputs by Africa RINSING team and farmers fields. He also said that the R4D committee met with the district tractor service providers to assist ploughing of Africa RISING farmers fields as it was one of the major challenge they encountered during the field visit. The team was also satisfied with the timely delivery of inputs to farmers.

Challenges:

1. Tolon R4D is yet to get support from African Rising.
2. Difficulties in getting some members to attend to meetings and other activities.

# Closing remarks

The chairman in his closing remarks thanked all the participants for their cooperation and immense contributions.

# Annexes

**Annex 1:** List of Participants at 2nd quarter regional research meeting

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| S/N | Name | Tittle | Institution |
| 1 | Nassam Mohammed | Contact Person | Kpalung |
| 2 | Inusah Adam | Contact Person | Cheyohi |
| 3 | Fuseini A. Majeed | Contact Person | Tingoli |
| 4 | Amadu Adam | Contact Person | Kprim |
| 5 | Ahmed Issah | Contact Person | Jana |
| 6 | Botinnaa Abdul-Rhaman | Contact person | Tibali |
| 7 | Alhassan Amadu | Contact person | Kprim |
| 8 | Issah Mohammed Saain | Contact Person | Duko |
| 9 | Alhassan Fuseini | Contact Person | Tibognayili |
| 10 | Abukari Abdul-Nasir | Contact Person | Gbanjong |
| 11 | Hawa Musah | Director | Dept. of Agric Tolon |
| 12 | Iddrisu Musah | Director | Dept. of Agric Kumbungu |
| 13 | Francis A. Neindow | Director | Dept. of Agric. Savelugu Nanton |
| 14 | Iddrisu Baba Mohammed | Extension Officer | Extension Officer |
| 15 | Terry Ansah | Lecturerer | UDS |
| 16 | Mavis Abdul- Korah | Nutrition officer | Ghana Health Service |
| 17 | Mohammed Abdul Rahman | R4D Representative | Savelugu |
| 18 | Abukari Issah | R4D Representative | Tolon |
| 19 | FauziaSadick | WIAD officer | Dept of Agric. SaveluguNanton |
| 20 | Abdul Rahman Nurudeen | Regional coordinator | IITA- Africa-RISING |
| 21 | Stephen Frimpong | Research Associate | IITA- Africa-RISING |
| 22 | Goodman Sarfo K. | PHD Students | IITA- Africa-RISING |
| 23 | Mohammed Amisu | Research supervisor | IITA- Africa-RISING |
| 24 | Ebenezer Nartey | Research supervisor | IITA- Africa-RISING |
| 25 | Nancy Adobea Addo | Research supervisor | IITA- Africa-RISING |
| 26 | Dokurugu Fuseini | Research technician | IITA- Africa-RISING |